

U.S. Sanctions

2697. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the contents of the news item captioned "Lift sanctions before Vajpayee visits U.S." appearing in the "Times of India", dated 29th June, 2000;
- (b) if so, whether Government have take up the issue with U.S. Government in right earnest;
- (c) whether it is realised that a time has come when U.S. ought to have strategic partnership with India; and
- (d) if so, what is the reaction of U.S. Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has seen the news item referred to in the Question.

(b) The United States has lifted a number of unilateral restrictions imposed on India after the nuclear tests of May 1998. Government has been conveying to the US side that all unilateral restrictions against India are unjustified and counter-productive and should be completely lifted.

(c) and (d) During the visit of the US President to India in March 2000, the two countries resolved to create a closer and qualitatively new relationship. Prime Minister and the US President outlined the vision for India-US relations in the 21st Century. As part of that vision, they agree that India and the United States will be partners in peace, with common interest in and complementary responsibilities for ensuring regional and international security, and to work together with others for strategic stability in Asia and beyond.